

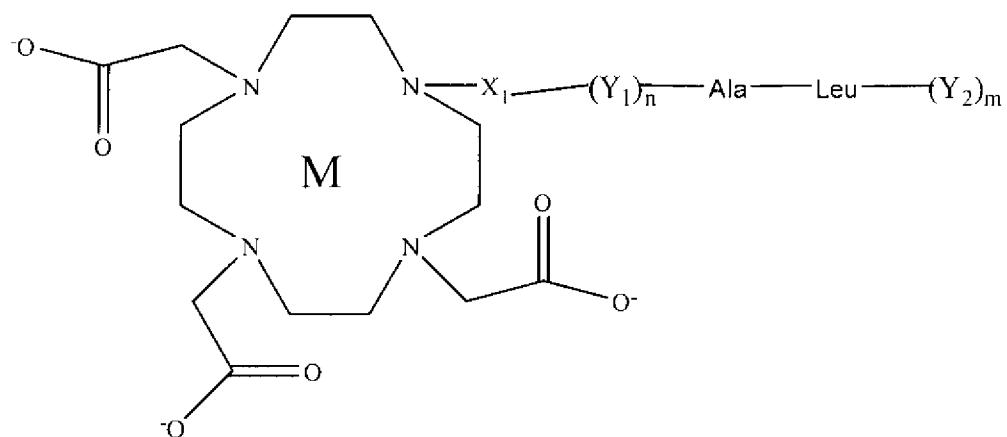
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-18. (Canceled)

19. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

- administering an MRI agent having the formula:

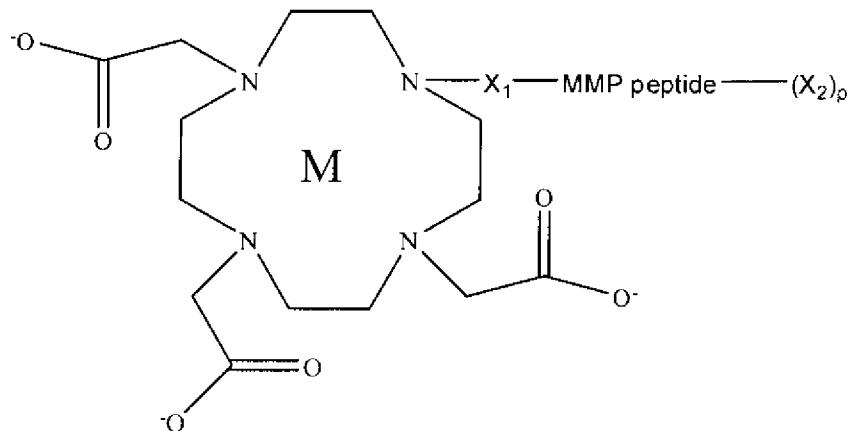


wherein Y₁ and Y₂ are independently chosen amino acid moieties; n and m are integers each independently an integer chosen from 0 to 5; and X₁ is an independent a linker; and salts thereof or a salt thereof, wherein said administering step results in an increase in the *g* value of said MRI agent or said salt ; and

- producing a magnetic resonance image of a cell, tissue, or patient.

20. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

- administering an activatable MRI agent having the formula:



M is a paramagnetic metal ion selected from the group consisting of Gd(III), Fe(III), Mn(II), Y(III), Cr(III), Eu(III), and Dy(III);
X₁ is an aryl group or an alkyl group;
X₂ is an aryl group, an alkyl group, a carbohydrate group, a nucleic acid group, or a lipid group;

MMP is a matrix metalloproteinase (MMP) active peptide; and

p is an integer from 0 to 1; and

~~salts thereof or a salt thereof; and~~

b) contacting said MRI agent under conditions wherein said MMP active peptide is cleaved by ~~interacts interacting with~~ an MMP such that the T_r of the said MRI agent is decreased the q value of said MRI agent is increased; and,

c) producing a magnetic resonance image of a cell, tissue, or patient.

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 19, wherein said M is Gd(III).

22. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 20, wherein said M is Gd(III).

23. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is selected from the group consisting of an aryl or alkyl group.

24 & 25. (Canceled)

26. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is -(CH₂CO)-, Y₁ is -Pro-Met- when n = 2, and Y₂ is -Trp-Met-Arg when m = 1 (SEQ ID NO: 4).

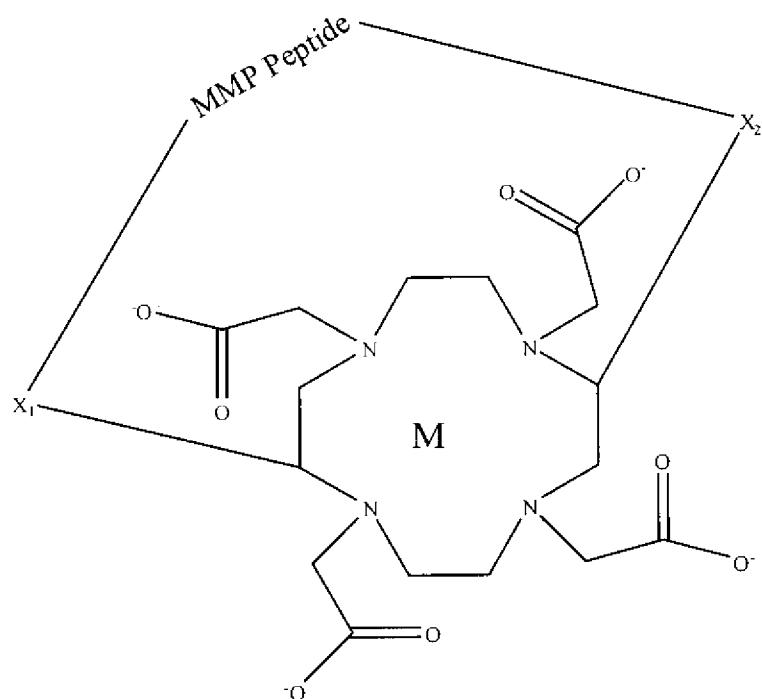
27. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is -(CH₂CO)-, Y₁ is -Met- when n = 1, and Y₂ is -Trp-Met-Arg when m = 3 (SEQ ID NO:2).

28. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is -(CH₂CO)-, n = 0, and Y₂ is -Trp-Met-Arg when m = 3 (SEQ ID NO:3).

29. **(Previously Presented)** A method according to claim 20, wherein said MMP is MMP 7.

30. **(Withdrawn)** A method according to claim 20, wherein X₁ is -(CH₂CO)-, said MMP peptide comprises Leu-Met-Trp-Arg, and p = 0 (SEQ ID NO:20).

31. **(Withdrawn - currently amended)** A method comprising:
a) administering an MRI agent having the formula:



M is a paramagnetic metal ion selected from the group consisting of Gd(III), Fe(III), Mn(II), Y(III), Cr(III), Eu(III), and Dy(III);

X₁ and X₂ are each independently chosen linkers; and

MMP is a matrix metalloproteinase (MMP) active peptide; and

salts thereof; or a salt thereof;

b) contacting said MRI agent under conditions wherein said MMP active peptide interacts with a MMP such that the T₁ of the said MRI agent is decreased; and,

c) producing a magnetic resonance image of a cell, tissue, or patient.

32. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 31, wherein said M is Gd(III).

33. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 31, wherein X₁ and X₂ are independently selected from the group consisting of p-aminobenzyl or substituted p-aminobenzyl.

34. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 31, wherein said MMP peptide is Pro-Met-Ala-Leu-Trp-Met-Arg (SEQ ID NO: 4).

35. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 31, wherein said MMP is MMP 7.

36. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 31, wherein said MRI agent has the formula:

